

**PUBLIC CHAPTER NO. 755**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2558**

**By Mr. Speaker Ramsey, Tracy**

**Substituted for: House Bill No. 2505**

**By Mumpower**

AN ACT to name an interchange on Interstate 81 in Sullivan County in honor of Emory "Cumbo" Sykes.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges in honor of those exemplary public servants who have contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, no Tennessean is more deserving of this honor than Ernest "Cumbo" Sykes of Sullivan County; and

WHEREAS, a resident of Blountville since 1961, Mr. Sykes has dedicated a tremendous amount of his personal time and efforts to enhancing Sullivan County with his involvement in various civic, military, school, and health organization activities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sykes is recognized throughout Sullivan County as an energetic and productive volunteer when the need arises; and

WHEREAS, he has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Blountville Community Chest for over twenty-one years and has served as the Community Assistance representative for the entire time, assisting his neighbors in the Blountville area who are experiencing crisis with heating, lights, groceries, medications, house fires, and other emergency/crisis situations; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sykes was a charter member of the Gunnings Ruritan Club, which is now merged with the Indian Springs club, and served as Zone 2 Governor in 1970, and District Governor in 1973; and

WHEREAS, honored as a Tom Downing Fellow in the Ruritan National Foundation, Cumbo Sykes is a former "Man of the Year" of the Indian Springs Ruritan; and

WHEREAS, a humble Christian, he is a forty-seven-year member of Indian Springs Baptist Church and is retired from Tennessee Eastman Company with forty years, seven months of service; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman who realizes that citizenship entails many responsibilities as well as privileges, Mr. Sykes served as Sullivan Central High School Athletic Booster Club President in 1980-81, and is a life member of

Patton-Cross White VFW Post 6975, having served with distinction as Deputy Post Commander, Post Commander, District Commander, a member of the Honor Guard, and currently, as Commander of the Military Order of Cooties; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to serving his fellow veterans with dignity and honor, Mr. Sykes is the Adjutant's representative for the State of Virginia VFW to the Veterans' Affairs/Veterans' Services for the James H. Quillen VA Medical Center at Mountain Home; and

WHEREAS, a post-World War II Army veteran of the Allied Occupational Forces, he proudly served his country in the European Medical Command in West Germany; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sykes is a member of King Lodge #681, F&AM and a 32nd Degree Mason; he is also a member of the Scottish Rite bodies, York Rite bodies, a Knight Templar, and member of the Jericho Shrine and its affiliated Legion of Honor and Hillbilly Clan; and

WHEREAS, an avid conservationist and philanthropist, he has formerly assisted the East Tennessee Kidney Foundation in its fundraising efforts, as well as the Kingsport Diabetes Association; and

WHEREAS, Ernest "Cumbo" Sykes is a person of impeccable morals and irreproachable integrity, who has worked assiduously to establish a brighter future for his fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, in appreciation of his tireless and proficient service to his community, the Sullivan County Board of County Commissioners has directed this body to name a certain interchange on Interstate 81 to permanently commemorate Mr. Sykes's bountiful life of purpose and commitment; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly most heartily concurs with this excellent proposal; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the interchange at Exit 66 (State Route 126/Memorial Boulevard) on Interstate 81 in Sullivan County is hereby designated as the "Emory 'Cumbo' Sykes Interchange" as a lasting tribute to a true Volunteer whose generosity and civic spirit know no bounds.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers at Exit 66 on Interstate 81, both northbound and southbound, and on State Route 126 (Memorial Boulevard), both westbound and eastbound, designating such interchange as the "Emory 'Cumbo' Sykes Interchange".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the Commissioner of Transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall become operative only if the cost of the manufacture and installation of such signs is paid to the Department of Transportation by Sullivan County within one (1) year of the effective date of this act. Such payment shall be made prior to any expenditure by the state for the manufacture or installation of such signs. The department shall return any unused portion of the estimated cost to Sullivan County within thirty (30) days of the erection of such signs. If the actual cost exceeds the estimated cost, an amount equal to the difference in such costs shall be remitted to the department by Sullivan County within thirty (30) days of Sullivan County receiving an itemized invoice of the actual cost from the department.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

**PASSED: April 7, 2008**



RON RAMSEY  
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE



JIMMY NAIFEH, SPEAKER  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**APPROVED this 15th day of April 2008**



PHIL BREDESEN, GOVERNOR